



United States State and Territorial Census Records

FamilySearch International

I. Value of using state and territorial census records

- a. Non-federal censuses help fill in the gaps in the years between the federal censuses. State and territorial census records may have asked different or unusual questions.
- b. All census records
 - i. Help identify family members and show changes over time
 - ii. Show neighbors and possible kin
 - iii. Show residence, a key to finding additional records
- c. Why were state and territorial censuses taken?
 - i. To petition for statehood
 - ii. To apportion the legislature
 - iii. For taxation purposes
- d. Most often taken in non-federal census years and often on the “fives”

II. Discovering what census records were created

- a. State Census Register
 - i. Hard bound volumes 1-3 are located on the 2nd and 3rd floor Reference Desk and in the Reference areas
 - ii. Digital version of the books can be accessed through the FHL catalog by performing a title search – *State Census Register* or call number search 973 X23us Vol. 1-3
- b. FamilySearch Wiki
 - i. Search the terms – United States Census State Census. Scroll down to the State, Territorial and Colonial censuses section. Click on the state name
 - ii. Search the terms – [state name] census. Scroll down to the State, Territorial and Colonial censuses section
 - iii. *State Census Records* by Ann Lainhart

III. How to find the census records

- a. Online Records
 - i. FamilySearch Historical Records
 - ii. Ancestry.com

- iii. FamilySearch Wiki for other websites housing censuses
- b. At the Family History Library
 - i. Use the *State Census Register*, FHL book 973 X23us Vol. 1-3, available at the 2nd and 3rd floor Reference Desks and the Reference areas
 - ii. Use the Family History Library Catalog, "Place" search
- c. Internet Sources
 - i. www.google.com
 - ii. Websites such as state archives, historical societies, and libraries

IV. Tips for successful census searching

- a. Use basic online search techniques such as wildcards
- b. Find an index: indexes are your best friend
- c. Analyze in the community context
 - i. Extract full information on individuals in the area with the same surname
 - ii. Extract full information on individuals by another surname living in the same household
 - iii. Identify census neighbors, at least 12 before and after.
 - iv. If near a state or county line, study people with the same surname in these nearby areas
 - v. Comb the neighborhood for families with similar origins, or occupations
 - vi. Keep looking if you don't find them the 1st time
 - vii. Watch county border changes
- d. Document as you go
 - i. Use a research log
 - ii. Summarize findings on the research log
 - iii. Cite the source. State censuses are a little-used source and are hard to identify without proper documentation
- e. Analyze the family in community context
- f. Limitations of the non-Federal censuses
 - i. Helpful to know the locality where your ancestor lived
 - ii. Incomplete: May not include all the existing counties
 - iii. Many are not indexed
 - iv. Many are not digitized

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